

Congressman

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Serving the People of Arizona's 3<sup>rd</sup> District



## The Supporting Young Language Learners' Access to Bilingual Education (SYLLABLE) Act



### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Dual-language immersion (DLI) programs are an effective approach to closing the achievement gap between children from high- and low-income families. These programs successfully educate native English speakers and English learners (ELs) in the same classrooms by developing students' linguistic and literacy abilities in two languages.

Research shows that DLI programs promote high levels of academic achievement and cognitive ability as well as promote bilingualism and biliteracy for ALL students. Research also shows that as children learn more than one language their cognitive dexterity increases, and this leads to more rapid skill acquisition and strengthened academic performance. Children in DLI programs develop cultural understanding and behaviors that will help them succeed in our global economy and are better prepared to meet the increasing demand for bilingual employees in our economy.

DLI programs are in extremely high demand across the country and those in very affluent communities have long wait-lists of children hoping to enroll. Despite growing interest in these programs, recent trends suggest that low-income communities have less access to DLI programs.

The "SYLLABLE" Act will help establish high-quality dual language immersion programs in communities with high numbers of children of low-income families, including English learners and minority children, and support those programs from pre-school through at least fifth grade.



### FIVE REASONS TO SUPPORT THE BILL

1. Dual Language Immersion (DLI) programs help prepare Americans for a more global society by strengthening their bilingualism, biliteracy, and cross-cultural awareness.
2. The demand for bilingual employees in the United States is very high and expected to grow.
3. Both native English speakers and English Learners in DLI programs experience substantial gains in language, literacy, and mathematics.
4. Low-income communities don't currently have as much access to DLI programs.
5. Kids from low socioeconomic status backgrounds make the biggest gains in DLI programs and they can aid in shrinking achievement gaps.

Currently endorsed by: JNCL-NCLIS, ACTFL, NABE, Seal of Biliteracy, NEA, UnidosUS, AFT